Comments on an intersexual bulbul

by G. W. Storey and James M. Harrison

Received 28th June, 1969

Through the kindness of Dr. M. B. Markus, we have been given the opportunity of studying the gonads from a specimen of a Red-eyed Bulbul, one of seven adults collected in the south-western Transvaal on 18th July, 1966, and racially resembling *Pycnonotus nigricans superior* Clancey.

Markus (1966) comments "The gonads of no. 1 were abnormal in certain respects, and further reference to this individual will be made elsewhere"; hence the present note. With regard to this specimen, Dr. Markus (pers. comm. to J.M.H., 27.5.68) writes as follows:

"Specimen 1 appeared to have a right testis (?) about 2.5 × 1.5 mm. and a left ovary (?), ovotestis (?). Cranially both adrenals were clearly visible, but the region where the accessory sex glands are normally situated had been damaged by shot. The bird appeared to be almost gynandromorphic in that the wing on the 'ovarian' side was almost 3.0 mm. shorter than the wing on the 'testicular' side. There were no differences between the left and right wings of five of the other bulbuls secured on the same day (measurements are to the nearest 0.5 mm.). Wings of ♂♂ *Pycnonotus* in the Transvaal tend to average longer than those of ♀♀. *P. barbatus* is not sexually dimorphic with regard to plumage."

Clancey (1964) gives comparative differences between *P. nigricans superior* and *P. barbatus tenebrior* Clancey. Wings of males of the former measure 98–109, of females 92–101 mm.

Markus (1966) has commented in some detail on the seven specimens which he collected. He also tells me (pers. comm. to J.M.H., 8.8.69) that specimen 1, the subject of the present note, had the left wing 101.5 mm., the right wing 104.5 mm. (measurements to nearest 0.5 mm.).

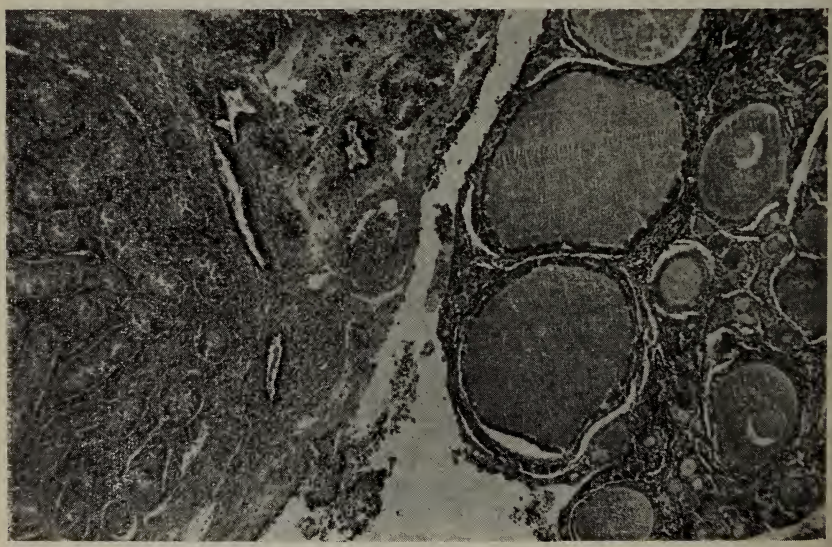

Fig. 1, photomicrograph of gonad block showing ovary and testis in the same field, ×75, H. & E.

Fig. 2, photomicrograph of gonad block showing testis and epididymis, ×75, H. & E.

Histopathology: The specimen received consisted of the gonad-adrenal block of tissue embedded in paraffin wax. It is the practice of the authors in cases of suspected gonad abnormality to take a series or step sections right through this block to ensure that all tissues are visualised. This technique (G.W.S.) has the advantage of ensuring that all parts of the gonads, adrenals, and kidneys can usually be studied in detail and is of particular importance when there is some doubt as to whether the organs are single or paired. In the present case there is a certain amount of post mortem autolysis, but this did not obscure the basic histology.

The adrenal glands are present on both sides and are quite normal. On the right side there is a clearly defined testis showing apparently normal tubules with spermatogenic cell layers, which although showing some mitotic activity do not appear to be producing mature sperms. It has been observed that in quite normal gonads, activity varies with the breeding season, and varies from a state of potency down to almost atrophic inactivity. The relative state to the breeding season in this particular specimen is not known.

On the left side there is a clearly defined ovary with an apparently normal impression of follicular development. We have thus opposing gonad types in the same bird on opposite sides and these correspond with the physical characteristic as described by Markus in his letter to the authors.

SUMMARY

The gonads of a gynandromorphic bulbul, *Pycnonotus barbatus superior* Clancey are described. Routine systematic study showed that the left wing was some 3 mm. shorter than the right, size being the only demonstrable difference between the sexes in this species.

This gynandromorphic finding was confirmed histologically, the left gonad being an ovary, and the right gonad a testis.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors are indebted to Dr. M. B. Markus, of Pretoria University, for sending them the gonad block of this specimen for study, and for asking them to publish the case.

We are also grateful to Mr. R. Waites, F.I.M.L.T., for the sections, and for the photomicrograph.

References:

Clancey, P. A. 1964. *The Birds of Natal and Zululand*, 323.

Markus, M. B. 1966. Systematic Notes on *Pycnonotus* from the south-western Transvaal. *Ostrich* 37, (4), 234.

Some new distributional records for Kenya

by P. L. Britton and J. F. Harper

Received 23rd June, 1969

Little has been written on the birds of the Nyanza Province of western Kenya, and in the course of a routine study of the birds of this area we have recorded several species hitherto unknown from Kenya. Some of these represent considerable extensions of known range, but others are known from ecologically similar areas of eastern Uganda, and it is likely that other species will be similarly recorded in the future. It is hoped that this will be the first of several papers listing our most interesting records, later to be incorporated in a check list of the birds of Nyanza.

Nomenclature follows White (1960, 1963, 1965). The following localities are mentioned: Lake Kanyaboli, 0° 3′ N., 34° 10′ E.; Kisumu, 0° 5′ S., 34° 45′ E.; Maranda, 0° 6′ S., 34° 14′ E.; Mulaha, 0° 3′ N., 34° 15′ E.; Ng'iya, 0° 3′ N., 34° 22′ E.; Rusinga Island, 0° 24′ S., 34° 10′ E.; Ukwala, 0° 11′ N., 34° 12′ E.; Usengi, 0° 4′ S., 34° 2′ E.; Waturi Point, 0° 27′ S., 34° 2′ E. All uncredited specimens are ours, and apart from two *Bradypterus graueri* and one *Chloropeta gracilirostris* which are in the British Museum (Natural History), they are all lodged in the National Museum, Nairobi.

Merops variegatus loringi (Mearns)

Seen on several dates at the edge of papyrus at Usengi, where two were ringed and released on 27th October, 1968. White (1965) did not record it east of Uganda, but Williams (1963) extended its range to extreme western Kenya; however, he omits it for Kenya in Williams (1967).

Britton (1968) omitted to mention the sympatry of this species and *M. pusillus meridionalis* (Sharpe) in Uganda, and they are also sympatric in extreme western Kenya. Weights and wing lengths of the two birds handled usefully augment the meagre data (all *M. v. bangweolensis* [Grant]) for this species in Britton (*op. cit.*): 23.5, 21.0g; 90, 88 mm.

Pogoniulus chrysoconus chrysoconus (Temminck)

Ad. ♀, 27th May, 1962, Kisumu (collected I. Bampton).

Ad. ♂, 24th May, 1969, Maranda.

Recorded by Jackson (1938) west of Kisumu, but omitted by Mackworth-Praed and Grant (1955) and White (1965). Bampton's record confirms its presence in Kenya and we have trapped it at Ng'iya (7th November, 1968) and Maranda (10th, 21st and 24th May, 1969).

Jynx torquilla subsp.

A bird first seen at Ng'iya on 19th February, 1969, was ringed and released there on 22nd February. It was an adult with wing 86 mm., weight